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SPECIAL REPORT

ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONGRESS

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

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ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Christian Democratic Party, the dominant element in Prime Minister Aldo Moro's center-left coalition government in Italy, convenes on 1 July in what will be an extremely important national congress. The moderate elements now running the party are expected to retain control, and to reaffirm its commitment to the center-left formula. Intramural contests for power, however, could undermine the government's stability by putting further limitations on Moro's maneuverability in his dealings with the other coalition partners (see Figure 1). In any event, conservative elements in the party will persist in their efforts to block implementation of the long-range socioeconomic reforms Italy has long needed.

Background

The Christian Democrats' decision last December to form a coalition with the Socialists resolved an issue which had for several years dominated intra-party polemics. All of the party's factions, except the right wing, voted in favor of the decision. In any case, with party prestige now committed, renunciation of the "opening to the left" would be difficult should the onus of a government collapse be placed squarely on the Christian Democrats. Opponents of the opening will try--by blocking reforms which were the quid pro quo of Socialist participation--to put the blame for a cabinet crisis on the Socialists.

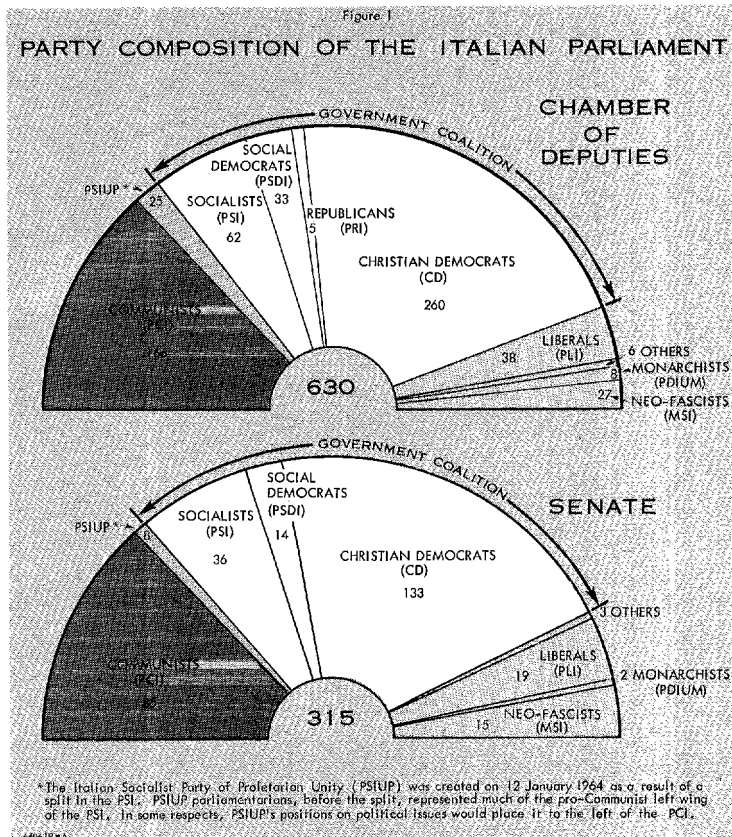
Opposition both to cooperation with the Socialists and to the government's reform program continues to be strong within the majority center faction as well as in the right wing. Sharp intraparty differences on how to

deal with Italy's current economic difficulties present obvious openings for anti-center-left elements to exploit.

The most disruptive behind-the-scenes maneuvering at the congress, however, may result from often ruthless personal ambitions. The outcome of such moves will have a decisive impact not only on the Moro government's stability, but on the effectiveness of this and future governments.

Preparations for the congress have been complicated by a complete shake-up of the party leadership following the formation of the center-left coalition (see Figure 2). In addition party finances are reliably reported to be in very bad shape. Although individual leaders are supported by private donors, and the leaders of the right-wing faction are amply provided for by industrialists, many of the party's traditional sources of

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self. It is hoped this will more clearly define the actual strength of the various party factions. The new voting system should also enable the resultant majority to exert more forceful control over party affairs than in the past. Critics of this innovation charge, however, that the new system will further sharpen factionalism, which is already acute.

The Key Issues

A task of primary importance facing the congress is to reach agreement on a party program covering both domestic and international issues. The debate on the program will center on issues critical to the policies and aims, and hence the tenure, of the center-left coalition. Chief among these will be the scope of long-range reforms and the timing of their implementation. Another will be the ways and means of coping with Italy's immediate economic difficulties.

funds were reportedly greatly reduced as a result of the party's decision to ally with the Socialists.

The main chore of the congress is to fill most of the seats on the party's top administrative and policy-making body, the 171-man National Council. This year the party is using a proportional voting system for the first time, both in the provincial elections which select delegates to the local congresses and in the national congress it-

All the coalition leaders recognize that large public expenditures for socioeconomic reforms are not possible until inflation and an adverse balance of payments are brought under control. Although the Socialists have agreed to postpone such expenditures until the economic situation improves, the stability of the Moro government hinges on the Christian Democrats' attitude toward the eventual enactment of reforms. In the interim, it is vital that the coalition give

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Figure 2

NATIONAL- LEVEL MACHINERY OF ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

The Italian Christian Democratic Party congresses are controlled by a National Council made up of elected representatives of the local political machines, which in turn are grouped usually into the alliances that make up the various party factions. The composition of the National Council therefore roughly reflects the relative strengths of the factions in the party as a whole. The council which met on 27 January 1964 had the following composition:

	Faction	Number of	Approx. % of Total
		Representatives	Council Membership
NATIONAL COUNCIL	Dorotei	67	39.3
	Fanfaniani	40	23.4
	Morotei	22	12.9
	La Base	9	5.4
	Rinnovamento	10	5.8
	Centrismo Popolare	18	10.5
	Independents	5	2.7
		171	100.0

The January meeting was called to create a new Central Directorate and Executive Board for the party following the resignation of Party Secretary Aldo Moro, who had become premier the previous month. The Central Directorate emerged as follows:

	Faction	No. of
		Members
CENTRAL DIRECTORATE	Dorotei	7
	Morotei	5
	Fanfaniani	7
	La Base	2
	Rinnovamento	2

Also established in January was a Committee of the Secretariat whose function is to "exercise general supervision over party policy." The first four members of this committee constitute the Executive Board of the Central Directorate.

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE CENTRAL DIRECTORATE	Political Secretary:	Mariano Rumor (Dorotei)	COMMITTEE OF THE SECRETARIAT
	Vice Secretaries for		
	Political Problems	Arnaldo Forlani (Fanfaniani)	
	International Relations	G. Battista Scaglia (Morotei)	
	Administrative Secretary	Renato Branzi (Fanfaniani)	
		Luigi Granelli (La Base)	
		Vittorino Colombo (Rinnovamento)	

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the impression of making some progress toward urgently needed reforms and that it adopt some of the less costly measures in the program. Some aspects of the plan to reform Italy's huge bureaucracy, for example, could actually lead to considerable savings.

More relative to the enactment of the program than the formulation of a platform, will be the private understandings that are likely to be worked out among the various factions. It will be these, more than the platform, that will establish the framework within which Moro can deal with his coalition partners, particularly the Socialists. Much will depend on whether Moro himself can succeed in reconciling sharp factional differences. In the past, as party secretary, Moro showed a remarkable ability to work out such compromises.

The party's six main factions (see Figure 3) have been engaging in bitter and tortuous maneuvers, particularly since mid-April when the campaign to elect delegates to the national congress began. Most of the struggle has been behind the scenes, and very often there has been little emphasis on the most important party policies. Much of the maneuvering hinged on the political ambitions and personal rivalries of party leaders, and the distribution of pork-barrel funds.

The Center: Morotei-Dorotei

Although separate factions, the Morotei and the Dorotei have found it expedient to make common cause in order to maintain a dominant position within the party. While they presented a joint program in campaigning for delegates, each is trying to improve its position at the congress at the expense of the other. For example, 25x1

Relations are also embittered by the quarrel--won by Rumor--over whether the candidates for the National Council the two factions are jointly presenting would be headed by Rumor or Moro.

The Dorotei faction reaffirmed its endorsement of the center-left reform program in early June, but many of its members are only lukewarm toward the reform aims of the "opening to the left" and some are bitterly opposed to them. Their main political tenet is that it is the party's duty to govern; hence, alliances and legislative measures are seen primarily as a means to this end.

The Morotei were active and enthusiastic in pushing for the

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formation of a center-left government and their support for many of the reforms places the faction just to the left of the Dorotei. Their main concern has been to block a possible understanding between the Dorotei and the party's second largest faction, the Fanfaniani, to squeeze Moro out of office. It appears that the unexpectedly strong showing made by the Fanfaniani at the provincial congress level was mainly at the expense of the Morotei-Dorotei. Although the latter will still have more than half the seats on the new council and thus dominate the congress, Fanfaniani views will have to be taken more heavily into account than had been anticipated, and a deal between the Dorotei and the Fanfaniani cannot be ruled out. This may be a key factor in determining the outcome of the Congress.

The Left: Fanfaniani

The Fanfaniani are to the left of the Morotei. Nevertheless, ex-Premier Fanfani, who had been strongly identified with the center-left concept in the past, now appears to be trying to regain power through an alliance with conservative elements within the party. In mid-April he dramatically claimed that the center-left coalition should not be considered "irreversible." His implicit willingness to abandon cooperation with the Socialists gave the impression that he was ready to consider either the formation

Figure 3

FACTIONAL GROUPINGS AMONG ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS

There have been a number of recent name changes by the factions and new names adopted to identify combinations of factions as they campaigned jointly for the National Congress. Some of these new identifications will probably prove temporary.

The name Dorotei is taken from the Convent of Santa Dorotea in Florence, where, in 1959, the then majority faction split into two factions, the Fanfaniani and the Dorotei, with the latter opposed to Party Secretary Fanfani's attempts to shift the party's axis more toward the left.

The name Morotei derives from the fact that the members of this faction consider themselves followers of Premier Moro and of his political line. In recent months the faction has adopted the name Unita Democratica dell'Apertura a Sinistra (Democratic Unity of the Center-Left).

The Morotei-Dorotei (also given as Morodorotei or Doromorotei), who have issued a joint motion for the congressional campaign, are using the name Impegno Democratico (Democratic Pledge).

Fanfaniani derives from the fact that members of this faction consider themselves followers of ex-premier Fanfani and of his political line. In recent months the faction has adopted the name Amici di nuove Cronache (Friends of the new Chronicles).

The names La Base (The Base), Rinnovamento Sociale (Social Renewal), and Centrismo Popolare (Popular Centrism) have identified these factions for a number of years. La Base and Rinnovamento, which issued a joint motion for the congressional campaign, are using the name Forze Nuove (New Forces).

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of a minority single-party government, possibly with the tacit support of right-wing forces, or the calling of a new general election. Fanfani's tactic is tailored to appeal to many in the party who would greatly prefer to govern alone, or at least without the Socialists and Social Democrats.

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Most leaders of the coalition parties have severely criticized Fanfani and he probably has failed in one of his main objectives--ousting Moro. Nevertheless, the right-wing faction and other conservatives support Fanfani's thesis although they apparently reject Fanfani himself. Fanfani can be expected to continue pushing the idea that Moro's leadership is weak and that his own stronger hand is again needed at the helm.

La Base and Rinnovamento

La Base, the farthest left of the Christian Democratic Party's "currents," stresses the need for far-reaching reforms. It has tried in various ways to strengthen Moro's position in order to give more vitality to his government.

Rinnovamento represents mainly Christian Democratic labor elements and agrees with La Base on most aspects of policy. At the January National Council meeting the two factions insisted, in opposition to the Fanfaniani and the Dorotei, that the conservative Centrismo Popolare faction be excluded from the Directorate, (the party's principal executive body). They threatened to go into opposition themselves rather than assent to the "fiction of a united directorate." At the congress, the two factions will present a joint statement fully supporting the center-left concept, but calling for faster progress toward implementing re-

forms. As shown by the provincial congresses, La Base and Rinnovamento have increased their strength and the chances are that their support for Moro will prove decisive should his position be endangered by a Fanfani maneuver.

The Right: Centrismo Popolare

Centrismo, despite its name, is on the right and responsive to the wishes of big-business interests and opposes the government coalition and its programs. This faction's position at the congress calls for a flat repudiation of the center-left concept and a return to a centrist coalition with the conservative Liberals.

At the congress, Centrismo will probably urge the adoption of economic policies known to be unacceptable to the Socialists. Centrismo antagonizes the Socialists by arguing that current economic difficulties make indefinite postponement of the agreed-upon reforms essential to national stability. The Centrismo's economic philosophy is shared by many key Dorotei, including Treasury Minister Colombo (who may be President Segni's eventual choice to replace Moro), Segni himself, and possibly party secretary Rumor.

Outlook

The returns from the provincial congresses show that the relative strengths of the

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factions have probably not changed substantially since the center-left coalition was formed last December. Although the Morotei-Dorotei seem to have lost their absolute majority, they are expected to continue their alliance and, with the addition of non-elected members "by right," secure more than half the seats on the new National Council and dominate the congress. As a result, the party is expected to reaffirm its adherence to the center-left government and its intention to live up to the agreed-upon program, possibly stressing that economic difficulties must be taken into consideration in conjunction with the enactment of reforms.

Since the Morotei failed to make the large gains they had anticipated, however, they will continue to be caught between Fanfani's drive for power on one side and the opposition of many Dorotei to the reform program on the other. Thus, Moro and his government will be vulnerable to an increasingly intense attack by these elements, particularly if the two join forces. Moreover, intraparty maneuvering will determine how forthcoming Moro can be in his private understandings with the other coalition partners. It is presently debatable whether the prospects for modernizing Italy's institutions--which is essential to the development of Italian democracy--will be materially improved at the congress.

Barring unexpected developments--such as the necessity for stringent anti-inflation measures which could bring on severe unemployment--the prospects for the Moro government to continue for the next few months appear fairly good. Although there is some threat of moves which might bring down the government and thus precipitate elections, it is unlikely that these would prove successful as few Christian Democratic opponents of the coalition are likely to favor taking the risks of Christian Democratic losses and likely Communist gains.

Many in the party, however, will attempt to alter the course of the center-left away from its reformist aims and, as they attempt to do so, will create situations which will strain relations with their coalition partners. Moreover, influential Dorotei leaders, such as President Segni, reportedly intend to support Moro only until after the nationwide election this fall. At that time, Segni--possibly with the support of Centrismo--apparently hopes to pull back from Moro in favor of a more rightist-oriented government, a development which would likely work to the ultimate benefit of the Communists.

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